

Angus

The Business Breed

A REWARDING WAY OF LIFE

Your first Angus heifer is an investment in the earning power and efficiency of an Angus cow and the excellent reputation of the Angus breed. If you keep all of the heifer calves you produce, you can start with one heifer and build a nice-sized herd over time.

Your bull or steer calves can help pay the production costs of your herd, and if need be, your cattle can help you pay for your college education.

By investing in the best heifer you can afford, you will take a giant step toward securing your future as a respected, successful breeder of registered Angus seedstock.



A RICH HISTORY

When you become part of the American Angus Association, you join a breed that is rich in history.

The quality of Angus beef and production efficiency of Angus seedstock have made it the most popular beef cattle breed in America. Each year the American Angus Association in Saint Joseph, Missouri, records more cattle than any other beef breed association in the world.

Angus cattle originated from Scotland. Their original name, still used in many countries around the world, is Aberdeen Angus, because they were first bred as purebred animals in Aberdeenshire and Angusshire, two counties in rugged northern Scotland.

Records of the polled (naturally hornless) ancestors of the modern Angus breed date back to 600 A.D. Farmers in Scotland began keeping records of ancestry in their herds about 1800, and the first Herd Book of Angus was published in 1862. All of the purebred Angus in the world today can be traced back to

those recorded in the early Scottish Angus herd books.

The first Angus cattle were brought to the United States in 1873 by George Grant, who established an agricultural development near Victoria, Kansas. The first bulls were used to breed native Longhorn cows. The offspring created a

sensation at the Kansas City Stockyards. They were so superior and produced such high quality beef that Angus were soon imported by the thousands. Plan your future in the cattle business, and be sure it includes Angus — the breed with a rich history that is

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WHY SHOULD YOU SELECT ANGUS?

Cattle producers admire Angus for their genetic ability to improve the value of commercial cattle. Each year thousands of registered Angus bulls are purchased to

use in commercial cow herds. Angus bulls, even when mated to cows of other breeds or crossbred cows, produce fewer calving problems than any other beef breed. There are some Angus bulls that should not be used on first-calf heifers, but for the most part, Angus

cattle mean ease at calving. Cattlemen know that calving ease means more live calves and faster rebreeding after calving.

Also, their dark skin greatly reduces eye problems such as cancer eye. Nearly every calf sired by an Angus bull has dark skin even though the hair growing out of it may be white. The

dark skin is far less susceptible to cancer eye, and with subsequent Angus crosses, cancer eye can be virtually eliminated. There are no sunburned or snow burned udders with black Angus cows either.

The American Angus Association was the first beef breed to identify its product and market it to the consuming public. Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) was developed in 1978, and today CAB is spanning the globe as the largest branded beef program in the world.

Before a carcass qualifies as a *Certified Angus Beef*® product, it must meet certain specifications. The live animal must be predominantly black with typical beef-type conformation and no dairy characteristics or evidence of Brahman influence. The carcass must have an average Choice or higher marbling degree, be “A” maturity (9 to 30 months of age), score Yield Grade 3 or leaner and exhibit medium to fine marbling texture.

Premiums are often paid for cattle meeting CAB live specifications.

INVESTING IN ANGUS

Many successful livestock breeders started with a youth project, and just like them, you have the opportunity to build a life in the livestock industry.

Buying your first heifer is an important step because she may become the foundation of your cow herd. Put careful thought and planning into buying your first calf and building a valuable herd.

A plan for success may require help and advice from your family, an experienced cattle producer, a beef extension educator or an agriculture teacher.

Learn more about your project, and meet other young people who share your interest in beef cattle by



getting involved. Membership in a 4-H club, FFA, your state junior Angus Association or the NJAA gives you those opportunities. Club leaders and advisors

also can give you guidance and advice as you get started. Do not be afraid to ask questions. The more information you acquire before getting started, the fewer mistakes you should make.

Owning a heifer means new responsibilities, new experiences and new decisions. Although this may be a youth project, raising cattle is usually a family effort. The most important people you will work with will be your parents. Discuss your project, your future and your plans with parents and family.

Define your goals. You may plan to exhibit your heifer at a livestock show. The competition at the many junior shows across the country is stimulating, and the experience is rewarding. You also will meet many friends and livestock producers at the shows. However, your goals should reach beyond the show ring. Look past the next county fair, state fair or National Junior Angus Show, and consider the future you want in the purebred cattle industry.

Get to know successful cattle producers in your area, and use their experience and advice. Angus is the most widespread beef breed in this country, so there are probably Angus breeders in your area who will help

you. A county agent, livestock extension specialist or vocational agriculture teacher can introduce you to breeders in your area. The member look-up link on the American Angus Association’s Web site allows you to find Angus breeders in your area.

Another valuable person you should know is your American Angus Association regional manager. Regional managers know the location of superior cattle and dedicated breeders. Obtain the name and telephone number of your regional manager from the Association office, *Angus Journal*, or on the Association Web site at www.angus.org.



Events such as livestock meetings, field days and sales in your area, will enable you to meet cattle producers and keep current on industry issues.

Learn how to select productive cattle by using expected progeny differences (EPDs), performance records and performance pedigrees, as well as by visual appraisal. Your regional manager can explain how to use these tools to develop and identify superior and productive animals. This will help assure that your first selection is a wise one.

WHEN YOU BUY A HEIFER

When you select a heifer be sure to:

1. Check the breeder's health program to see if the heifer's vaccinations and health management are up-to-date.
2. Check her tattoos in both ears. They should match her registration paper exactly.

When you buy your heifer, ask the breeder to transfer the registration certificate to you as soon as possible.

If you plan to show her, check ownership deadlines for the shows and make sure you meet them.

You may want to arrange with the breeder to have your heifer bred when she is old enough. Or, you may prefer to get acquainted with an AI (artificial insemination) specialist in your area and evaluate the bulls offered for service.

Selecting and buying your first heifer is a very important step, but the challenge has just begun. The path to becoming a successful cattle producer requires one well-planned step after another.

Tips on Selecting Cattle

- ✓ Set your goals
- ✓ Know the purpose of your cattle, i.e. breeding, show
- ✓ Determine the age range of your herd
- ✓ Determine the quality of your herd
- ✓ Set the price that you can afford
- ✓ Structure is a necessity
- ✓ Evaluate the genetics

USE PERFORMANCE RECORDS

Most successful Angus breeders keep Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) and use them to identify genetic differences in their cattle. You can use AHIR information to compare a multitude of traits, including growth, production and carcass information. The AHIR program can provide information to identify superior genetics and aid in selection for your herd.



Good cattle are more valuable when the owner keeps detailed, accurate performance records. If you buy at an auction, look for performance records in the sale catalog and talk to the breeder before the sale. You may even want to visit his or her herd before the sale to be sure the calf you buy has outstanding parents, as well as an above average record of its own.

Performance records rank individual animals. By looking at an animal's ratio, you can determine how it compared to the other animals in the herd. A ratio of 100 means the animal was average in the herd for that particular trait.

For example, a heifer whose weaning weight is 500 pounds and who is average for that herd, will have a 100 weaning weight ratio. Another heifer in the herd that weighs 550 pounds is 10 percent above the herd average, and her weaning weight ratio would be 110. A heifer that weighs 450 pounds at weaning is 10 percent below the herd average, and she would ratio 90 for weaning weight.

EPDs ARE THE KEY TO YOUR CALVES' FUTURE

After determining how the heifer ranked among her herd mates, ask to see her EPDs. EPDs are estimates of an individual's genetic transmitting ability in a particular trait compared to the entire Angus breed. Birth, weaning and yearling weight EPDs, as well as maternal and carcass EPDs are available. Use those EPDs to see how she compares to the breed as a whole.

Once you have purchased a heifer, enroll her in AHIR. No matter how small your herd, even if it is one heifer, you can record and keep performance records. This is important for three major reasons.

First, breeders who weigh their cattle and keep performance records have an easier time identifying superior cattle. Second, AHIR records serve as an excellent marketing tool. And third, the records you keep add to the volume of information available about Angus cattle for the entire industry.

EPD's											
Production						Maternal					
CED Acc	BW Acc	WW Acc	YW Acc	YH Acc	SC Acc	CEM Acc	Milk Acc	MkH MKD	MW Acc	MH Acc	\$EN
+5.96	+1.998	+43.98	+81.98	+1.97	-.3196	+11.95	+20.98	337414303	+38.94	+3.94	+7.79
Carcass						Ultrasound					
Cwt Acc	Mrb Acc	RE Acc	Fat Acc	%RP Acc	Grp Prog	%IMF Acc	RE Acc	Fat Acc	%RP Acc	Grp Prog	
+19.88	+0.0689	+19.87	+0.03686	-.4087	2661125	+0.2196	+0.3196	+0.04396	-.2096	24745752	
\$ Values											
Wean Value (\$W)			Feedlot Value (\$F)			Grid Value (\$G)			Beef Value (\$B)		
+27.44			+23.00			+9.24			+32.07		

STUDY YOUR RESOURCES

A livestock project is an investment. Before you buy a heifer, put together a budget so you will know the financial requirements of raising a heifer to maturity. If you must borrow money, a bred heifer might be a wiser investment than a weaned heifer calf. A weaned heifer will require nearly two years of feed and care before she weans a calf to bring a return on your investment.

Pasture, feed, grain, hay, silage, shelter, fence, water supply, working chutes and pens are all part of the resources that support a livestock operation. Study the resources available to you, and determine how much of your cash investment must go toward providing a suitable environment for your heifer.

If you plan to show your heifer, you will need specific equipment—a show halter, show box, grooming supplies and grooming chute. Perhaps you can borrow equipment or share equipment with another junior exhibitor.

IS THERE A RIGHT PRICE TO PAY?

Prices paid for registered Angus heifers vary greatly. A young heifer with unproven parents generally costs less than a bred heifer sired by a top bull and out of a high-performing cow. This price variance depends on many things, some of which include: performance records and EPDs of the heifer and her

parents, bloodlines in the pedigree, physical appearance, age, whether or not she is bred, and current cattle prices.

To get an idea of what Angus cattle are worth, consult your regional manager or a trusted cattle producer to find out what Angus heifers are bringing in your area. Attend several area Angus sales and study the various offerings to get an idea of what the current market is, and try to determine how much money you have to invest in a heifer.

Keeping in mind the goals for your Angus heifer project, make a list of the traits you want your heifer to have. Rank those traits from the most important to the least important. For example, structural soundness may be at the top of your list followed by being bred to a bull with a low birth weight.

Once you start looking at heifers, you may have to compromise some of the traits at the bottom of your list, but try to find a heifer that meets the standards you thought were the most important.

With your project goals and budget in mind, visit Angus breeders or Angus sales in search of a heifer that meets your needs and fits your budget.

MAKE SURE YOUR HEIFER IS TRANSFERRED CORRECTLY

Once you have purchased your registered Angus heifer, make sure the seller has all of the correct information to transfer the animal to you.

Give the seller the exact name and address of how the animal is to be transferred. If you are a member of the American Angus Association, give the seller your member code. The seller will send this information to the American Angus Association, which will transfer ownership and return the paper back to the seller. The seller should then send the paper to you.

Check the Papers

- ✓ Is your name **CORRECTLY** listed?
- ✓ Does the tattoo listed match that of your heifer's?
- ✓ Is the issue date correct?
(Note: some shows have an ownership deadline.)
- ✓ Is the breeding information listed?